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ABSTRACT

A growing number of psychologists seem to be involving themselves in independent psychological practice. Consistent with this trend, Division 42 (Independent Practice) of the American Psychological Association (APA) was developed. Division 42 has grown considerably in recent years, with a membership of over 5,000 psychologists. While psychologists in Division 42 have a common interest in private practice, information generally is limited about practitioners who affiliate with it as opposed to other applied divisions. This survey compared psychologists (N=150) exclusively affiliated with Divisions 42 (Independent Practice), 12 (Clinical) and/or 29 (Psychotherapy), or 17 (Counseling) on three variables: major field, special areas of interest, and employment setting. Subjects exclusively affiliated with Division 42 identified their primary field, area of interest, and employment setting as clinical psychology, therapy, and private practice, respectively. Division 42 members were highly similar to individuals exclusively affiliated with Division(s) 12 and/or 29. Division 42 members were most dissimilar to individuals exclusively affiliated with Division 17. Division 42 members were almost exclusively practitioner-oriented. These results seem to strongly agree with the basic focus and major thrust of Division 42 and its members: to enhance psychologists' understanding of, and ability to deal effectively with, private practice issues and the private practice setting. (Author/ABL)

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Psychologists in Divisions 42, 12/29, or 17: A Comparative Examination

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Abstract

This survey compared psychologists exclusively affiliated with Divisions 42 (Independent Practice), 12 (Clinical) and/or 29 (Psychotherapy) or 17 (Counseling) on three variables: major field, special areas of interest, and employment setting. Individuals exclusively affiliated with Division 42 identified their primary field, area of interest, and employment setting as clinical psychology, therapy, and private practice, respectively. Division 42 members were highly similar to individuals exclusively affiliated with Division(s) 12 and/or 29. Division 42 members were most dissimilar to individuals exclusively affiliated with Division 17. The survey results were considered and briefly discussed.

Psychologists in Divisions 42, 12/29, or 17: A Comparative Examination

A growing number of psychologists seemingly are involving themselves in independent psychological practice (Norcross & Prochaska, 1982; Watkins, Lopez, Campbell, & Himmell, 1986). Consistent with this trend, Division 42 (Independent Practice) of the American Psychological Association (APA) was developed. Division 42 has grown considerably in recent years, with a membership now including over 5000 psychologists. The rapid growth of Division 42 suggests that the private practice setting is a particularly salient workplace to numerous psychologists.

While psychologists in Division 42 have a common interest in private practice, information generally is limited about practitioners who affiliate with it as opposed to other applied divisions, e.g., Divisions 12 (Clinical), 17 (Counseling), and 29 (Psychotherapy). We were interested in better understanding the characteristics of psychologists who exclusively identify with Division 42. Specifically, we were interested in answering four questions: What are the major fields of psychologists who maintain exclusive Division 42 affiliation? What are these psychologists' areas of interest? Where do these psychologists work? How is this group of Division 42 psychologists distinct from other groups of psychologists

who exclusively identify with a different applied division? Previous studies (Osipow, Cohen, Jenkins, & Dostal, 1979; Watkins, Schneider, Cox, & Reinberg, in press), which examined the characteristics of psychologists exclusively affiliated with Divisions 12 and/or 29 and 17, have reported some distinct differences in practitioners in regard to major fields, interest areas, and work settings. We wanted to extend these earlier studies to include Division 42 members. Such an extension may provide information on the distinctiveness (or lack thereof) of psychologists whose primary identification is with Division 42.

Method

Subjects

To provide comparative information with the Division 42 members, names of individuals exclusively affiliated with Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 17 were also selected. (The "12 and/or 29" designation was chosen because it had been used in two similar studies; Osipow et al., 1979; Watkins et al., in press.) Names of potential subjects were randomly selected by computer from the APA's 1986 membership files. Three groups were formed: (a) members affiliated with Division(s) 12 and/or 29 but who had no affiliation with either Division 17 or Division 42 (Group 1); (b) members affiliated with Division 17 but who

had no affiliation with Divisions 12, 29, and 42 (Group 2); and (c) members affiliated with Division 42 but who had no affiliation with Divisions 12, 17, and 29 (Group 3). Fifty names were selected for each group.

Group 1 consisted of 17 females and 33 males (*M* age = 44.9; *SD* = 11.4; based on 42 who reported their ages). Group 2 consisted of 11 females and 39 males (*M* age = 47.1; *SD* = 10.7; based on 40 who reported their ages). Group 3 consisted of 17 females and 33 males (*M* age = 43.8; *SD* = 7.2; based on 36 who reported their ages.).

Procedure

Biographical information for each subject was obtained from the 1985 APA *Directory*. Three types of information were collected: (a) major field; (b) special areas of interest; and (c) employment setting. Comparisons were made to examine any similarities or differences between the three groups on the three variables under study.

Analysis

Percentages were computed on the three groups for major field, special areas of interest, and employment setting.

Results

Major fields. Table 1 provides data on individuals' major fields across Division 12 and/or 29, Division 17, and Division 42. Psychologists affiliated with Divisions(s) 12

and/or 29 and Division 42 primarily identified clinical psychology as their major field of interest; their identifications with clinical psychology, in comparison to Division 17 members, were more frequent. Conversely, Division 17 members primarily identified with counseling psychology; their identifications with counseling psychology, in comparison to Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 42 members, similarly were more frequent. Other comparisons of major fields for the three groups were not particularly remarkable.

Insert Table 1 about here

Identified interests. Table 2 provides data on members' identified interests across the three divisional groups. Therapy was the primary interest area of the majority of Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 42 members. Both of these groups identified therapy as their primary area of interest more so than Division 17 members. Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 42 members also endorsed the "developmental and family" area more frequently than Division 17 members. Conversely, Division 17 members as opposed to Division(s) 12 and/or 29 or Division 42 members more frequently endorsed "counseling" as their primary interest area. No other notable differences were observed between the three groups.

Insert Table 2 about here

Work settings. Table 3 provides data on the work settings of members in Division(s) 12 and/or 29, Division 17, and Division 42. Private practice was the work setting with which the largest percentage of Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 42 members identified. Only a minimal number of Division 17 members identified their primary work setting as private practice. Individuals from all three groups were involved somewhat in agency and administrative positions (from about 10% to 30%). The largest portion of Division 17 members identified an academic position as their primary employment. In contrast, only 1 Division 42 member identified his or her primary employment setting as academic. Other differences between the three groups were negligible.

Insert Table 3 about here

Discussion

The results of this survey suggest that individuals who exclusively identify with Division 42 identify primarily with clinical psychology, psychotherapy, and private practice as their major field, area of interest, and work setting, respectively. A notable though not highly significant number of Division 42 members also had

an interest in developmental and family issues. In addition to private practice, about half of the sample of Division 42 members were involved in agency and administrative positions. Thus, as would be anticipated, Division 42 members in our sample were almost exclusively practitioner-oriented (e.g., engaged in psychological practice in an independent or agency setting or involved in the administration of mental health services). Such an orientation would seem highly consistent with the basic purposes of Division 42.

The Division 42 members were quite similar to individuals exclusively affiliated with Division(s) 12 and/or 29. Similarities were noted in major field, areas of interest, and work settings. Although many reasons may exist for members in Division(s) 12 and/or 29 and Division 42 maintaining exclusive affiliations, psychologists in these divisions still appear to have a lot in common and do not seem markedly distinct. Thus, individuals in all of these divisions appear to be identified with clinical psychology and to be primarily interested in traditional clinical interests and skills.

The Division 42 members (as well as the Division(s) 12 and/or 29 members) were most dissimilar to Division 17 members. As in previous surveys (Watkins & Campbell, in press), over half of the Division 17 members were employed

in a higher education setting. This seems consistent with the counseling specialty's orientation toward developmental and educational issues and interventions (APA, 1952, 1981). Therefore, while a growing number of counseling psychologists are moving into private practice (Watkins et al., 1986), members who exclusively identify with Division 17 perhaps represent a more traditionally "pure" counseling psychology group. Whatever the case, exclusively identified Division 42 members are quite different from exclusively identified Division 17 members in that they primarily view themselves as independently practicing clinical psychologists and therapists as opposed to academically-oriented psychologists. Again these findings would seem to strongly agree with the basic focus and major thrust of Division 42 and its members, that is, to enhance psychologists' understanding of and ability to deal effectively with private practice issues and the private practice setting.

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Table 1

APA Members' Major Fields

Groups	Division(s) 12 and/or 29	Division 17	Division 42
Major Field of Interest	Members 1985	Members 1985	Members 1985
Developmental	0	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
Clinical	40 (80%)	0	37 (74%)
Counseling	0	41 (82%)	2 (4%)
General	1 (2%)	0	0
Educational	0	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
Commerce and Business Administration	0	0	0
Personality	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0
Professional	0	0	1 (2%)
Psychometrics	0	0	0
Industrial/ Organizational	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	3 (6%)
Education/Teaching	1 (2%)	0	0
School	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)
Systems Methodology and Issues	0	0	0
Psychopharmacology	0	0	0
Social	0	1 (2%)	0
Other	5 (10%)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)

Note. Division 12 - Clinical; Division 29 - Psychotherapy; Division 17 - Counseling; Division 42 - Independent Practice.

Table 2

APA Members' Identified Interest Areas

Groups	Division(s) 12 and/or 29	Division 17	Division 42
Interests	Members 1985	Members 1985	Members 1985
Testing and Management	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0
Developmental and Family	5 (10%)	0	7 (14%)
Personality	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)
Community	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)
Diagnostics	4 (8%)	1 (2%)	0
Behavior Disorder	3	0	0
Counseling	2 (4%)	29 (58%)	3
Educational	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	0
Therapy	28 (56%)	4 (8%)	30 (60%)
Applied/Experimental	0	0	1 (2%)
Industrial/ Organizational	0	3 (6%)	2 (4%)
Vocational Counseling	0	2 (4%)	0
Other	4 (8%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)

Note. Division 12 = Clinical; Division 29 = Psychotherapy; Division 17 = Counseling; Division 42 = Independent Practice.

Table 3

APA Members' Occupational Settings

Groups	Division(s) 12 and/or 29	Division 17	Division 42
Occupational Settings	Members 1985	Members 1985	Members 1985
Faculty	11 (22%)	20 (40%)	1 (2%)
Private Practice	22 (44%)	3 (6%)	25 (50%)
Agency	10 (20%)	14 (28%)	11 (22%)
Researcher	0	0	0
Administrator	6 (12%)	11 (22%)	12 (24%)
Retired	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	0
Lecturer	0	0	0
Writer	0	0	0
Other	0	0	1 (2%)

Note. Division 12 = Clinical; Division 29 = Psychotherapy; Division 17 = Counseling; Division 42 = Independent Practice.